

HA-1393

Between 1880 & 1885

Old Aegis Building  
29 Courtland Street  
Bel Air  
public

This engaging building sports Bel Air's only example of the Victorian front gable in brick, but the facade dates from 1905, late for such construction. The building originally was an ordinary frame structure with a front porch. It had been a shop, a bakery, and an ice cream parlor. When John Worthington, Sr., bought the building to house his newly purchased newspaper in 1905, he added one bay to the sides, thus bringing it out to the sidewalk, and gave it a new brick facade. It was the home of The Aegis until 1963. It now houses County offices.

The round-arched 3/3 window in the middle bay of the second story maintains the traditional connection between front gables and such windows; in this case, however, the gable is occupied by a datestone which reads "The Aegis 1856-1905".

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

HA-1393  
1313934601

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Aegis Bldg.

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

29 Courtland

1st

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Bel Air

VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

Maryland

Harford

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☒ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

contact: Thomas Dick

Harford County

Bldg. Inspector Telephone #: 838-6000

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code

Bel Air

VICINITY OF

Maryland 21014

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 615

Folio #: 175

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bel Air

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The Old Aegis Building is on the south side of Courtland Street between Main and Bond Streets in the Town of Bel Air, Maryland. It has been extended and renovated many times, most recently around 1963 when Harford County purchased the building for county offices. The Energy Policy Office, Plumbing Inspection Office and an office of the County Recreation Department are located there. There is also a small private apartment on the second floor.

The original building, then called the Ferry Building, was an L-shaped two story brick structure with a slate gable roof, double inside chimneys with corbelled caps, and another, outside, chimney at the rear of the ell. It was double fronted with a porch. The interior had three rooms up and down with a center hall and an open string stair rising along the west side of the hall. Two rooms were on the east side of the hall and one room and a rear side porch were on the west side, upstairs and down. The second floor porch is still there, but the first floor porch was enclosed in 1963.

When John Worthington, Sr. bought the property in 1905 to locate his newspaper, the Aegis, there, he began a series of additions and renovations; he extended the front by one bay and added the present facade as well as adding a five bay two story clapboard addition with a gable roof at right angles to the original gable. The alley side of this addition is currently covered with asbestos shingle, while the other two sides show their original ship-lap siding. After World War II, around 1947, the Worthingtons added two single story cement block rooms with a shallow gable roof and an inside chimney with corbelled cap to the rear of the clapboard 1905 addition to accommodate a new press.

The present facade is a five bay, two story elevation in red brick, laid in common bond, with a front gable encompassing the three central bays including the entry. Set in the gable is an oblong date stone bearing the words "The Aegis", and the dates 1856 and 1905, the date of the founding of the paper and the date of its move to 29 Courtland Street. The four windows flanking the entry are set in wooden surrounds, and have wooden sills and stone lintels at the top. They are the long Victorian double-hung windows, 2/2. Four steps rise to the entry which set in a foot and a half. It is topped by a stone lintel of larger scale than those topping the side windows. New, post-1963, double aluminum framed, single pane doors with a single-pane transom complete the entry. Centered above the entry is a double-hung, 3/3 round arched window with a brick round arch on top. Despite the 1905 date, the effect of the facade is Mid-Victorian.

The windows of the other elevations vary in size and have no regularity of placement, but all of them except those in the gables are 6/6 with the exception of two pairs of windows in the second story of the original ell. Each of this pair of windows has a pair of windows, 4/4, with a fluted panel between. This may have been the shape of the windows in the original facade or it may reflect a desire for a little elegance because they are the apartment windows.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Between 1880 and 1885 BUILDER/~~UNKNOWN~~ Barbara Ferry Dunnigan

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This two story brick building with a Gothic front gable is a good example of the kind of multi-use structure built in Bel Air in the second half of the nineteenth century. The lot had a frame building built on it between the time the Robinsons sold the land to Herman Stump, Henry Archer and Stevenson Archer in 1867 and the time they leased the land to Mrs. Barbara Ferry, a widow, in 1868. That building was removed in 1880 and replaced by a two story brick double-front building by Mrs. Barbara Ferry Dunnigan. The building was occupied by Bauer's Bakery and then by Annie Purcel's Ice Cream Parlor (1887). It probably always had a flat upstairs. By the turn of the century the building was described as being occupied by offices. It is a tribute to the simplicity of business arrangements in the nineteenth century that one building could be occupied sequentially by offices, stores, a bakery, or a householder with a minimum of interior remodeling. In 1905 Mrs. Dunnigan encountered financial difficulties and was forced to sell the whole half block. Number 29 went to John D. Worthington, Sr., who had just purchased the Aegis. Mr. Worthington enlarged the building, extending the front one bay towards Courtland Street and built the present facade. The new elevation was quite simple and old-fashioned for the time; it has a mid-Victorian flavor with the gable and round-arched window in the center bay. From 1905 to 1963 the building was the home of the Aegis. The Worthingtons extended the building at least once after that in 1945 or 1946 to accommodate a new press. When the Aegis' new plant on Hays Street was completed, the Worthingtons (John D., Jr.) sold 29 Courtland to Harford County for use as offices.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Occupies parcel 839 in the Town of Bel Air. 46' (Courtland) x 71'

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

M. Larew

20 October 1978

ORGANIZATION

Town of Bel Air

DATE

838-8700

STREET &amp; NUMBER

39 Hickory Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

The remaining second story porch in the west elevation, nearly hidden by the next building, has a plain rail and balusters. Both screen doors retain probably original fan-shaped scroll work in the corners.

The interior woodwork in the original building is severely plain, but the turned newel post, balusters, and the gently curving stair rail give the hall a touch of restrained elegance. The stairway is similar in all details to that in the Archer Building two doors east on Courtland Street and suggest the same builder.

During the time The Aegis occupied the building, the west ground floor room was the office of the successive John Worthingtons who edited and published the paper. The alcove to the rear in this room was occupied by the advertising manager. Across the hall, the front room was the business office, and the rear, smaller, office held the news room. The hall parallel to this smaller office, connecting the old building with the 1905 addition, held the proofreaders' tables. The ground floor part of the 1905 addition was both composing room and print shop until 1947 when the new press was installed in the cement block addition.

There has always been an apartment in the second story of the old building. After 1905, Mrs. Worthington divided the second story of the new addition into several rooms and rented them. Access is by an enclosed staircase in the back of the 1905 addition, and a pair of doors in the second story east elevation presumably provided access for furniture too large for the staircase. The attic story is also divided into rooms, but the slope of the roof has made them not of much use. The photographic work was often done in one of the upstairs bathrooms.

Today, the energy office is where the editor's office was, in the west ground floor room. Directly above is the recreation department regional office. Across the hall to the east, the plumbing inspection office occupied the two rooms on ground floor. The second story of the 1905 addition is unoccupied, as is the attic. The old composing room and press room have some machines of the county maintenance department.

The cellar under the old building clearly shows where the old foundation was and had access (now bricked up) to the next building on the west.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
21 STATE CIRCLE  
SHAW HOUSE  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FIELD SHEET  
Individual Structure Survey Form

SURVEY NUMBER: HA-1393

NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:

UTM REFERENCES:  
Zone/Easting/Northing

U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:

PRESENT FORMAL NAME: Old Aegis Bldg.

ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:

PRESENT USE: County Offices

ORIGINAL USE: Offices to 1905-Newsp. plant

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER: 1905 - 1963

BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:

Excellent (X) Good ( )  
Fair ( ) Poor: ( )

THEME: Architecture

STYLE: as remodeled 1905 - Victorian

DATE BUILT:  
1880

COUNTY: Harford

TOWN: Bel Air

LOCATION: 29 Courtland

COMMON NAME: The Old Aegis Bldg.

FUNCTIONAL TYPE: Commercial

OWNER: Harford County  
ADDRESS: Bel Air, Maryland

ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:

Yes (X) No ( ) Restricted ( )

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Local (X) State ( ) National ( )

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

1. Foundation: Stone ( ) Brick (X) Concrete ( ) Concrete Block ( )
2. Wall Structure
  - A. Wood Frame: Post and Beam ( ) Balloon ( )
  - B. Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick (X) Stone ( ) Concrete ( ) Concrete Block ( )
  - C. Iron ( ) D. Steel ( ) E. Other:
3. Wall Covering: Clapboard ( ) Board and Batten ( ) Wood Shingle ( ) Shiplap ( )  
Novelty ( ) Stucco ( ) Sheet Metal ( ) Aluminum ( ) Asphalt Shingle ( )  
Brick Veneer ( ) Stone Veneer ( )  
Bonding Pattern: Common Other:
4. Roof Structure
  - A. Truss: Wood ( ) Iron ( ) Steel ( ) Concrete ( )
  - B. Other:
5. Roof Covering: Slate (X) Wood Shingle ( ) Asphalt Shingle ( ) Sheet Metal ( )  
Built Up ( ) Rolled ( ) Tile ( ) Other:
6. Engineering Structure:
7. Other:

Appendages: Porches ( ) Towers ( ) Cupolas ( ) Dormers ( ) Chimneys (X) Sheds ( ) Ells ( )  
Wings ( ) Other:

Roof Style: Gable (X) Hip ( ) Shed ( ) Flat ( ) Mansard ( ) Gambrel ( ) Jerkinhead ( )  
Saw Tooth ( ) With Monitor ( ) With Bellcast ( ) With Parapet ( ) With False Front ( )  
Other:

Number of Stories: 2

Number of Bays: 5

Approximate Dimensions: 38'10"x112'8"

Entrance Location: Courtland St.

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:

No Threat (X) Zoning ( ) Roads ( )  
Development ( ) Deterioration ( )  
Alteration ( ) Other:

LOCAL ATTITUDES:

Positive (X) Negative ( )  
Mixed ( ) Other:

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION: Cellar shows old foundation - stone with 7 courses of brick where the facade was extended by one bay to the east - sub-flooring shows it too - Bricked up opening to Mr. Ranneberger's cellar. No sign of previous entry. Probable end chimney - Newel post, balusters original and in good condition - Like Archer Bldg. Courtland door surrounds entirely plain. New entry - doors in old section seem original? Second floor rear porch over a group of 2 4/4 windows with a reeded wooden panel in between. The one in the old part is clearly original because of window surround - flat arch in brick. Also in 2nd story of World War I addition double doors and eye bolt in overhang - as if news print was received on 2nd floor for storage - yet the room looks domestic. The windows in the 1 bay addition have wooden lintel rather than brick, flat arch. Front windows have wooden lintel as does entry - only arched window under gable has brick surround. Metal added to entry top step. Included offices: Energy Policy, Plumbing Inspection, Recreation and an apartment attic access to World War I Addition.

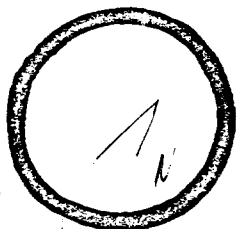
RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Probably built by S.A. Williams and J.T.C. Hopkins, possibly by Edward Ferry. Used as offices. In 1905 John Worthington bought it and moved the Aegis there, altering the facade and adding to the rear. The Aegis remained there until 1963 when the paper moved to its new site on Hays Street and the building at 29 Courtland was sold to the County for office space

REFERENCES: Harford Democrat  
Interview with Richard Worthington, Publisher  
of the Aegis.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

MAP: (Indicate North In Circle)



SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane( ) Woodland( ) Scattered Buildings( )  
Moderately Built Up( ) Densely Built Up( )  
Residential( ) Commercial(X) office  
Agricultural( ) Industrial( )  
Roadside Strip Development( )  
Other:

M. Larew

RECORDED BY:

Town of Bel Air

ORGANIZATION:

19 October 1978

DATE RECORDED:



Stevenson Archer Williams (1851-1932), the second president of the Harford National Bank, was born at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He was the son of Dr. Lewis Jeffery Williams, U.S.N., a Medical Director of the U.S. Navy, and Harriet Hays Archer, a daughter of Judge Stevenson Archer (1786-1848). He attended various Harford County schools and the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. He graduated from Princeton in 1870 and from the University of Maryland law school in 1873. He was a Republican serving in the State Senate (1897-1901), and was an unsuccessful candidate for Governor in 1903. He was in charge of the building of the Conowingo Dam, was President of the Maryland State Bar Association and of the Harford Bank.

In 1875 he married A.E. Street, daughter of John Rush Street. They had four children, Elise, Harriet, Elizabeth, and Lewis J.

Sources: Portrait & Biographical Record of Harford and Cecil Counties, Maryland. New York, 1897, pp. 542-43 (Stewart Day, Edwin H. W. Harlan, Jr., and Barbara Day), A Short Biography of Those Whose Portraits Adorn the Walls of The Harford County Court House, n.p. (1974), p. 48

THE AEGIS

The Southern Aegis was founded in 1856 by George and John Cox, former editor of the Harford Gazette. The newspaper was the voice of Southern sympathizers in the county. In 1858 Cox edited the paper alone for a while and then was joined by John Carroll Walsh. During the war Cox seems to have been alone again. He found his task increasingly difficult and sold the four page sheet, by then called the Southern Aegis and Harford County Intelligence, to A. W. Bateman (1824 - 1874) in 1862. At that time the paper's office was in the Town Hall opposite the Court House on Main Street. By 1864 Frederick W. Baker was either a partner or the sole owner. Bateman who had been in the state legislature for one term after 1851 became the first Associate Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit and served in that capacity until 1871. He probably sold his share in the newspaper to Baker in 1865. By 1878 the paper was printed in the brick building at 119 South Main Street. Baker sold the paper to Frank E. Gorrell in 1894, and in 1899 the publication changed hands again when it was acquired by Walter Finney and Louis Dashiell. During the post-Civil War period the paper held a staunch Conservative Democrat position.

In 1904 John D. Worthington, Sr., bought the paper and in 1905 moved it to 29 Courtland Street. The paper has continued to be published by successive generations of the Worthington family, the most recent publisher being Richard Worthington who succeeded his brother John D. Worthington III on the latter's death in 1978. The paper moved to its new home on Hays Street in 1962.

During its 125 year existence The Aegis has moved from being hand-set and printed on a press that would have been familiar to Benjamin Franklin through the "hot-type" production of the linotype machine (1915) and a hand-fed flat-bed press to the present "cold-type" photographic process with the most modern kind of rotary presses. It is the oldest paper continuously printed in Harford County.

Sources: The Aegis  
Wright, Baltimore, 1967, pp. 395-96.

AEGIS BUILDING29 Courtland

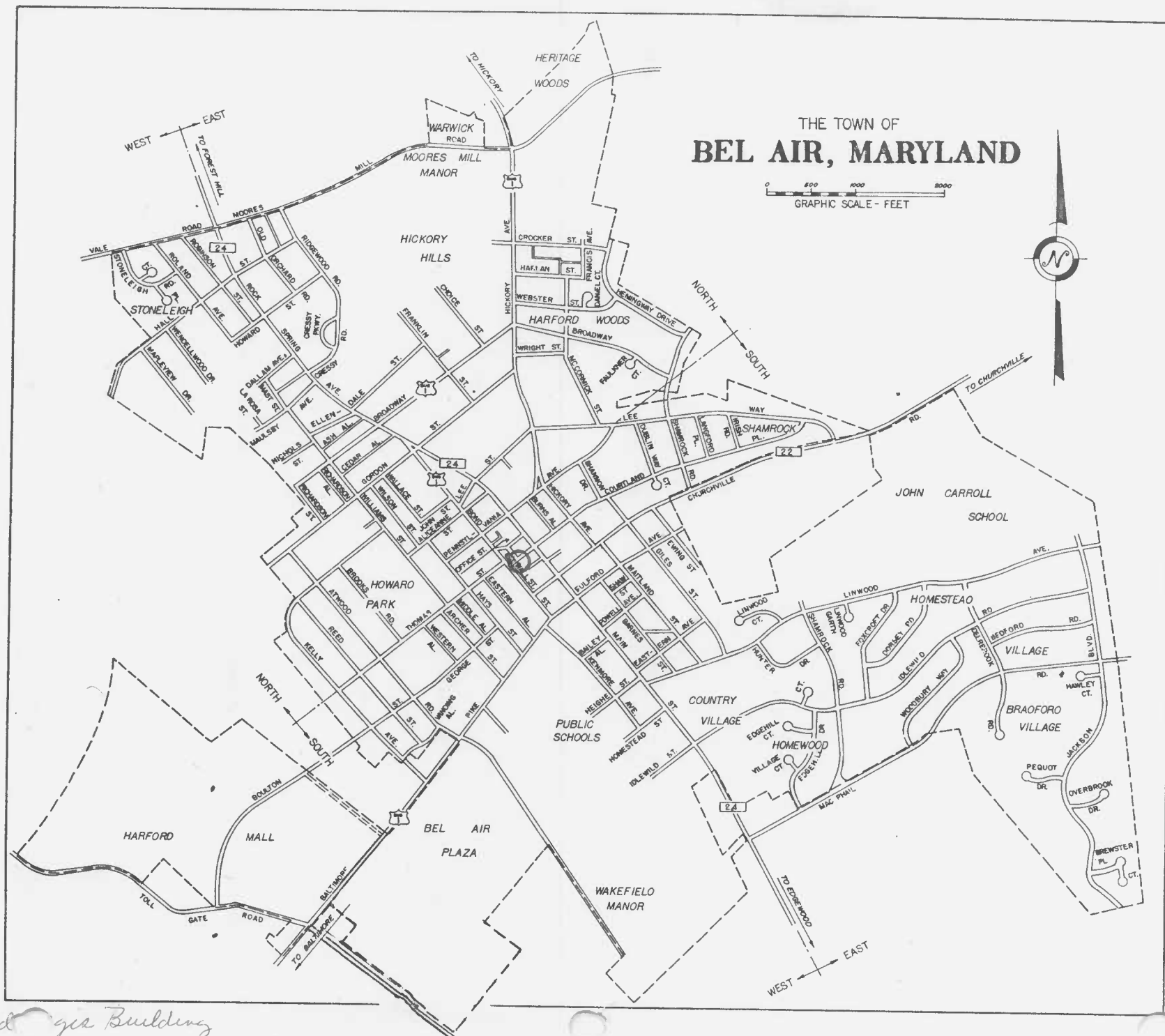
Owners: Harford County

- 615/175      1 April 1963  
John D. Worthington, Jr. and Annie McC., w  
                 to  
County Commissioners
- 242/189      25 September 1936  
Theresa Mc Worthington, widow  
                 to  
John D. Worthington, Jr.
- The land devised to the grantor by the will  
                 of John D. Worthington, Sr. (JA16/432)
- 115/467      20 September 1905  
Stevenson A. Williams, Trustee, in Jarrettsville  
Bldg. Assoc. vs Barbara Dunnigan  
                 to  
John D. Worthington, Sr.
- 45/40                      part of  
Hannah Van Bibber to Dunnigan 1882
- 20/411                      Stump, Archer, and Archer 1868  
Lease to Barbara Ferry (Dunnigan)
- 19/217                      Farnandis, Trustee, Ann Robinson and Martha  
Robinson to Stump, Archer, and Archer 1867
- (Hannah Van Bibber = d. of Stevenson Archer who  
got the reversion of this by 26/246 1871)



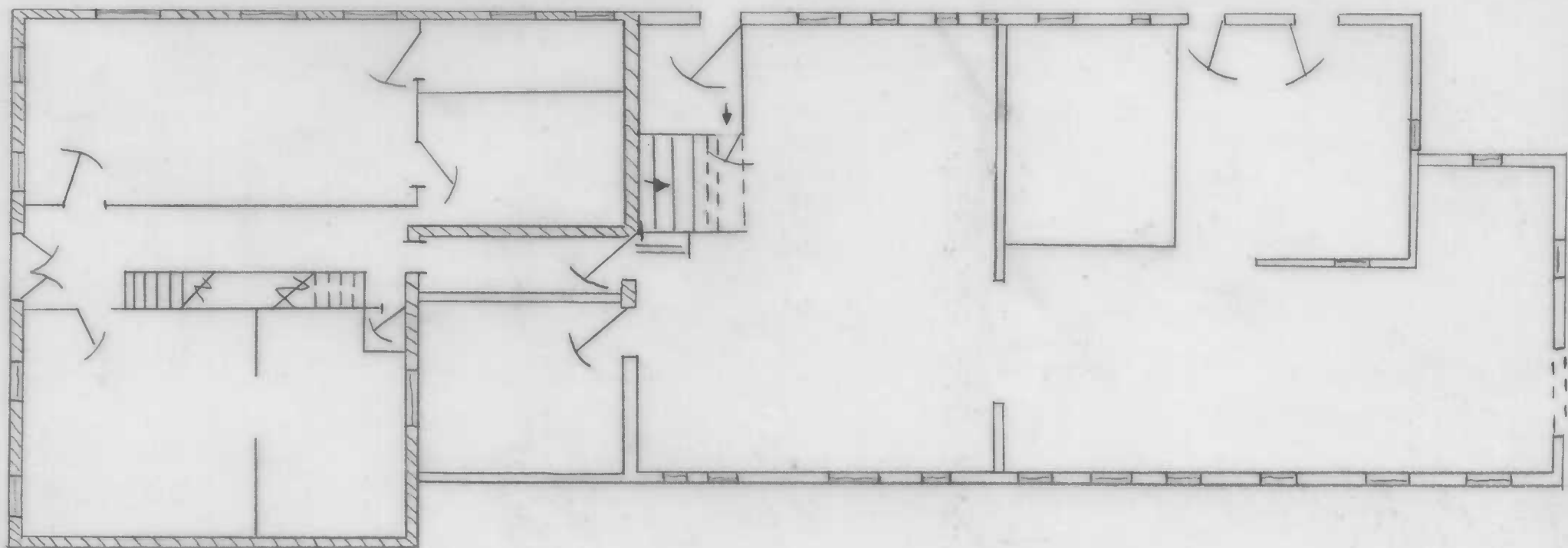
# THE TOWN OF BEL AIR, MARYLAND

0 500 1000 2000  
GRAPHIC SCALE - FEET



HA-1393

The Old gas Building  
29 Courtland St.



DRAWN BY: MARILYNN LAREW  
TRACED BY: G. CUNO

HA-1393

OLD AEGIS BUILDING  
29 COURTLAND STREET  
BEL AIR, MARYLAND

SCALE: 3 in = 32 ft





OLD AEGIS BLDG, 29 COORLAND, BEL AIR

FRONT (NORTH) ELEVATION

MILAREW, 1978

HA-1393













THE OLD ALGIS BLDG, 29 COURT RD, BEL AIR  
REAR (SOUTH) ELEVATION SHOWING ADDITIONS  
M LAREW, 1976

HA 1393



HA-1393





HA - 1393



HA - 1393



HA-1393

180  
EQ. S. BUILDING  
1905

ONE WAY

Old Aegis  
HA-1393

THIS PHOTOGRAPH  
By: W. Robert Wallis  
Fountain Green Road  
Bel Air, Md.